

Theme: David expressed his faith in God's loving care through songs of worship to His Shepherd King.

## I. Intro - Lord of the Rings - Warriors Sing

- A. Epic battle scene in Fellowship of the Ring
- B. Boromir dies in the battle
- C. Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli - sit and recite poetry!
- D. First time I read this it struck me as odd - warrior poets?
- E. Then I thought of the great biblical warrior-king-poet - David!
- F. David was Israel's singer of songs!  
These are the last words of David:  
"The oracle of David son of Jesse, the oracle of the man exalted by the Most High, the man anointed by the God of Jacob, Israel's singer of songs: 2 Samuel 23:1
- G. Most of these are captured for us in the book of Psalms
- H. Today: Psalm 23 - most famous; deals with a shepherd

## II. The Shepherd's Song

- A. Two metaphors for a king
  - <sup>1</sup> The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
  - <sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows. Psalms 23:1, 5
- 1. vv1-4 - Cared for as a sheep by a Shepherd
- 2. vv5-6 - Cared for as a guest by a host
- 3. Both metaphors speak of provision and protection

- 4. Both are metaphors for kings in the ANE - shepherd; hosts who care for their subjects

## B. The Shepherd-Host King - Yahweh

- <sup>1</sup> The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.
- <sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalms 23:1, 6
- 1. Inclusio of name in 1, 6
- 2. YHWH - first word in Psalm; near end of Psalm
- 3. Yahweh's Presence surrounds David - beginning and end

## III. The LORD Is My Shepherd

### A. The LORD is my Shepherd

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. (v1)

- 1. A common metaphor for God in Scripture  
Then he blessed Joseph and said, "May the God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day <sup>16</sup> ... —may he bless these boys. Genesis 48:15–16

He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. Isaiah 40:11

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. John 10:11

2. The personal nature of God's Shepherding care  
The Lord is **my** shepherd.... (v1)

- a. Usually shepherding speaks of whole flock
- b. Here it is personal - MY Shepherd
- c. Although God does Shepherd His whole flock, He also Shepherd each of us individually

B. Unpacking the metaphor of Yahweh as our Shepherd

1. God's total care for us

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. (v1)

- a. This is the overarching truth to be unfolded
- b. Basis - if you have the Lord, you have everything!
- c. The Good Shepherd will meet our every need

2. A list of God's care for His individual sheep

- a. He provides for our basic needs - food & water  
He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, Psalms 23:2
  1. He gives us grass and water to care for us
  2. The waters are quiet - the kind sheep need
  3. "lie down" & "lead" both have connotation of gentle leading to provide rest
  4. God's provision - food, water, rest
- b. He gives the rest of restoration  
He restores my soul. Psalms 23:3
  1. Continues the idea of rest - rest to restore our soul
  2. Word for "restore" usually means to "repent/return"

3. Our Shepherd leads us to return from our wandering so that we can find true rest from the restless agitation of sin and rebellion.

c. He guides us in paths of righteousness

He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Psalms 23:3

1. Continues the idea of restore from sin - guides us to walk on secure, safe paths - righteousness
2. The path of sin may be tempting - but it is never safe or secure for it is where the wolf lies in wait for us
3. He does this for His names sake - when we do not walk in righteousness it is not only harmful to us - it brings disrepute to the name of God

d. He is personally with us in the darkest, most dangerous places

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. Psalms 23:4

1. Our path in this fallen world includes dark valleys (valley of the shadow) - but He is with us
2. But even in this place we need not fear - our Shepherd is with us, personally leading and caring for us
3. Note how David shifts from 3rd to 2nd person at darkest moment of need - God's Personal Presence emphasized in the valley of the shadow of death
4. God's rod and staff - protection and guidance
  - (A) Rod - weapon to defend and protect flock
  - (B) Staff - walking stick, also used to guide the flock
  - (C) Together these are a comfort - we are protected and guided even in the darkest, scariest, most confusing places

4. Our comfort, our hope, and our security in life's darkest moments is God's Presence with us. When we face these moments, more than anything we need to look for Him - He is there with us

## IV. The LORD Is My Host

### A. The LORD is my gracious host holding a banquet

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Psalms 23:5

1. The scene shifts - from valley of shadow to banquet table!
2. But note we still have the emphasis on the Personal Presence of the LORD - "you prepare... you anoint"
3. God is our gracious host, spreading out a feast for us
4. We feast - right in front of our enemies! This is the privilege of those who seek and find the Personal Presence of God even in the midst of trial and suffering - we feast while our enemies rage
5. Note the lavish nature of the banquet - head anointed with oil, the cup overflowing with fine wine!
6. Our God is a lavish host, caring for our needs, filling us to overflowing with His blessings and Presence

### B. Pursued and kept by covenant mercies - now & forever

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalms 23:6

1. God's goodness and love (hesed) are ours

2. Love - hesed - covenant mercies and faithful love
3. God's covenant character is in view - this Shepherd and host will be faithful to us
4. Our Covenant Shepherd/host will pursue us - even should we wander

a. Follow - RDPH - is to tame and anemic

b. Radaph - to pursue with purpose & passion

My times are in your hands; deliver me from my enemies and from those who **pursue** me. Psalms 31:15

The enemy **pursues** me, he crushes me to the ground; he makes me dwell in darkness like those long dead. Psalms 143:3

For he never thought of doing a kindness, but **hounded** to death the poor and the needy and the brokenhearted. Psalms 109:16

1. Psalm 23:6 is only place where radaph is translated 'follow' - it is always 'pursue' or similar
2. God's covenant mercy, love, and blessings do not just follow us - they pursue us to overtake us and to keep us!

5. These blessings will be ours forever - now & in eternity!

Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and **I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.** Psalms 23:6

6. We can trust that we will experience God's favor forever, not because we are faithful, but because He is! Our covenant Shepherd/Host will pursue us to rescue, restore, keep, and bless us

## V. Applying the Word Of Our Shepherd

### A. Can I say "The LORD Is MY Shepherd"?

1. This is a beautiful poem, full of comfort
2. But it is only true if God is my personal Shepherd
3. Have you looked to Him as your Shepherd?

### B. Do I have confidence in my Shepherd/Host?

1. This is a psalm of confidence - expression of faith
2. Do I have confidence and faith that My Shepherd will care for Me?
3. Do I have confidence and faith that My Shepherd is with Me - no matter what?
4. Do I have confidence and faith that my Shepherd will pursue and keep me to eternity?

### C. Cared for, fed and kept by Jesus our Great Shepherd

1. Jesus is the fulfillment of Psalm 23
2. He is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11)
3. He has brought us into God's fold
4. He will never leave or forsake us
5. He anoints us with the oil of the Holy Spirit
6. He gives to us every covenant blessing to overflowing
7. He feeds us at His Table of Love
8. Come to His Table - eat and drink and be filled

9. Come and be renewed by the Spirit to know You are His forever

## The Shepherd Singer

Psalm 23  
April 17, 2016  
Communion

Hebrews 13:20-21

Teaching keywords: biblical characters; confidence; faith; God's character; worship; covenant

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, <sup>21</sup> equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Hebrews 13:20-21

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.  
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,  
3 he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.  
4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.  
5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.  
6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.  
Psalms 23